



Title: **Schaller Telephone Company celebrates 100 years of service**  
 Author:  
 Size: 132.68 square inch  
 Schaller, IA Circulation: 736

# Schaller Telephone Company celebrates 100 years of service

Schaller Telephone Company will celebrate their 100 years of service this Monday, December 21st. Come for cookies, homemade cupcakes by Sean Ehrp and drinks from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Enjoy a luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. by Sizzlin' J BBQ.

The first telephone system in Schaller was organized in 1900 by W.K. Whiteside. An operator was on duty, from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m., to help the 27 patrons complete their calls.

Four years later in 1904, the Eden Mutual Telephone Company was organized, with local townspeople and farmers owning the stock. According to terms of the charter, Eden Mutual was dissolved December 27th, 1915, and replaced by the present company, Schaller Telephone.

The Schaller Telephone Company was organized from stockholders of Eden Mutual, and received its Certificate of Incorporation March 20, 1915. A.D. Woodke

served as President and W.M. Speaker as Secretary.

Construction of the present two-story building on 111 W. Second Street, was completed in 1915. Dr. T.H. McCrary occupied office space on the first floor, and the "new" telephone switchboard was installed on the second level.

Sac County Electric Company gained control of the company in March, 1929, by purchasing a majority of the outstanding common stock. H.F. Russell became president and served until April, 1940, when H.J. Reimers purchased controlling interest and became both President and Operating Manager. At that time the board of directors included: H.J. Reimers, President; Norma Reimers, Vice President; and John Reimers, Secretary-Treasurer.

Following World War II, modern and dependable communications became a necessity. The first modern dial system was installed in 1957, re-

placing the out-moded manual switchboards used at the time. Glenn Reimers became the Manager that same year.

In 1956, there were 573 phones in operation, revealing a stark contrast to the 27 listed in 1900. And progress was made.

The company has grown through a series of three expansions: Galva's Telephone Company (405 patrons) merged with the Schaller Telephone Company (522) patrons in December, 1960. Then, in February 1961, the exchange at Cushing was purchased. New dial equipment was installed at Cushing, cable was put underground, and single-party service was provided to the 1,133 patrons of the Schaller Telephone Company. The company acquired the Kiron exchange January 1, 1974, and the task of upgrading facilities to improve service in that area began.

Remodeling of the original telephone building and the adjacent structure to house improved and additional facilities

began June 10, 1977, and all equipment was installed. The program to upgrade the system to provide the best possible service to the then 1,572 patrons was completed by the end of 1977.

Of the 437 miles of telephone lines required to service the subscribers, only two miles of line remained above ground; the 435 miles of cable were buried underground to insure a minimum of service interruptions.

Schaller Telephone Company continued its modernization efforts in 1984 when the company began conversion to digital switching. At the heart of this upgrade was the installation of Northern Telecom DMS 10 digital switches in each of Schaller Telephone Company's four exchanges. This project was complete when the digital switch in Kiron was put into service on May 28, 1987.

**Schaller Telephone..  
Continued on page 2**

Title: **Schaller Telephone Company celebrates 100 years of service**

Author:

Size: 132.68 square inch

Schaller, IA Circulation: 736

# Celebrating 100 years of service

**Cont. from page 1**

Additional modernization projects added were toll cable, fiber optics, new switch, dial up internet, and high speed internet (DSL). Glenn Reimers retired in 1987. Steve Reimers was manager from 1985 through 2002. Missy Kestel became the general manager in 2002 after Steve's retirement and continues to manage today and became an owner in 2007.

Schaller Telephone Company replaced their switches in 1998-1999 to become Y2K compliant and to be able to offer new telephone features such as caller id, call waiting, call forwarding, along with many others. Over the past 10 years internet has become a standard service in homes. Schaller Telephone Company began providing dial up service and today provides high speed internet in all four exchanges. Between 2009 and 2012, they put fiber to the rural areas in Schaller, Galva, Cushing and Kiron to be able to provide faster internet speeds.

Today the company has approximately 1,220 Schaller Telephone Customers, which may have any combination of phone, internet and cable

TV. Their current board members are Joann Reimers, Missy Kestel, Jim Kestel, Don Lee and Bob Boeckman.

Created by Steve and Joann Reimers in December of 1987 as a subsidiary of the Schaller Telephone Company, Schaller telemarketing is a leading provider of outbound calling applications within the agricultural, publishing and communications industries. Through the efforts of Steve, Schaller Telemarketing was awarded a revolving loan from the State of Iowa. Once repaid, this became the revolving loan that now resides in Schaller, which many companies have benefited from throughout the years.

Incorporated in 1993, Prism Marketing Group was formed as the marketing arm of Schaller Telemarketing. Prism acquired the contracts from various clients and then placed the work into Schaller Telemarketing. Clients that have counted on Prism/STC include Farm Progress Companies, Pioneer Seeds, DuPont, MCI, Allstate Motor Club, Qwest Communications, Monsanto and many more.

A very strong and tenured management staff is currently led by

Chris Grothe—Manager. Current client department employees are Jen Grothe, Jenn Brenner, Kris Bloyer and Yvonne Sandhoff.

In December 1995 Steve purchased the cable television systems in Kingsley, Merville, Holstein, Anthon and Correctionville. In June 2004 they sold Kingsley and Merville Cable TV systems to Evertek, Inc.

Missy's father, Steve and herself created Advanced Network Communications, LLC, a CLEC (Competitive Local Exchange Carrier) in 1997 filing for a certificate of convenience and necessity to provide service to Correctionville, Anthon, Holstein, Ida Grove, along with numerous other communities. They sold fifty percent of their partnership to Long Lines.

In 2006, Schaller Tel sold their cable TV system to Corn Belt Telephone Company after 22 years of service and in 2013 they sold the Odebolt cable TV system to Sac County Mutual Telephone Company after 17 years of service.

In 2013, Long Lines sold Long Lines Wireless to AT&T, which Schaller Telephone was an agent for and a provider of cellular service in their ANC

CLEC exchanges as well as some of Schaller Telephone Company's ILEC exchanges.

In 2014, Schaller Telephone purchased another independent telephone company and its subsidiaries, Goldfield Telephone Company. Along with two other telecommunication companies, they provide telephone, cable TV and internet services there also.

Over the past nine years Schaller Tel began providing service to several cellular providers on towers in and around the servicing area.

"We continue to grow our fiber network and continue to upgrade services to our customers," Missy Kestel told the *Herald*.

"We are proudly serving the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) with connectivity to local schools since 1992.

"We strive to provide an up-to-date, quality product, with exceptional customer service to all of our customers.

"We have a dedicated staff that truly cares about our customers and our business. These communities we provide service to, have been loyal to us and we try to show our appreciation by giving back to each community by supporting their

Title: **Schaller Telephone Company celebrates 100 years of service**  
Author:  
Size: 132.68 square inch  
Schaller, IA Circulation: 736

projects, groups and organizations.”

Current Schaller Telephone Company employees are Joann Reimers, Missy Kestel, Brandee Schultz, Diana Mytrue, Stephanie Brinkman, Linda Peterson, Connie Davidson, Ashley Schulte, Jim Kestel, Bob Boeckman, Tim Finnegan, Chad Bloyer, Kent Turnquist, Earl Whetstone and Chris Grothe.



*Schaller Telephone Company celebrates their 100 years of service this year. Join them Monday, December 21st from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for refreshments and beverages. Come for lunch by Sizzlin' J BBQ, beginning at 11:30. Pictured above is the Schaller Telephone Company located at 111 W. 2nd Street.*